

## **RITTIK CHAUDHURI**

NIH-Cambridge Scholar 2005

Degree: Duke University: B.S. Biology (2004)

Research Area: Cell Biology



Rittik Chaudhuri graduated *Summa cum laude* from Duke University in 2004 with a major in Biology, a minor in Chemistry, and a concentration in Genetics. While at Duke, Rittik earned numerous awards, including a National Merit Scholarship, Phi Beta Kappa, and Distinction in Biology. He was also awarded the prestigious Cold Spring Harbor Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which annually brings twenty-five of the world's top undergraduates to Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL) for a summer of intensive research. Under the direction of Dr. David Jackson, Rittik identified a novel trafficking protein and three putative plasmo-desmal receptors in Arabidopsis. He complemented his research at CSHL with independent projects at the Medical College of Ohio and the Duke University Medical Center. Rittik also excelled in the classroom, completing his tenure at Duke with a 3.945 GPA, placing him eleventh out of 1155 students in the Class of 2004. In addition to the NIH-Cambridge Scholarship, Rittik was awarded a Gates-Cambridge Scholarship (2005) to carry out a Ph.D. in Cell Biology. For his dissertation project, he has chosen to investigate the role of HIV-1 Nef in the down-regulation of CD4, which is thought to be a key event during the course of AIDS pathogenesis. Outside of the lab, he has been a Safe Haven Counselor and teaching assistant at Duke University. He also has volunteered at the Y.E. Smith Elementary School Reading program. In describing himself, he states, "To experience both the wonder and joy that came with something new, something novel, and something worthwhile – that is why I wish to become a scientist."